241 252 262 574 272 [415] boiled beans; other tamales (*petul*), which are made from dough and whole beans; and finally, still more atole. The atole is served not in individual *jicaras* but in two or three large ones (*batzil-booch*), which are passed from person to person. The same is done with the other foods; they are served in one or two large pots (*mucul pulato*) out of which everyone serves himself. This banquet is given only on the first day of the planting; if other days are required, the milpero himself does the planting.

241 574

241 Since weeds grow rapidly during the rain season, the milpa must be hoed twice before it reaches maturity. For this the luk or coa is used and also the hoe (*asron*), the same one used to break the soil before planting. The first weeding is done in June, the second between July and August. Women help their husbands in this chore and sometimes do it entirely themselves, since the men are in the habit of leaving for Tapachula to work as peons on the coffee plantations.

[462] [566] [464]

244 Also in the milpa beans of several varieties are planted: *chuil-chenek* (or *ibes*, according to the Ladinos); *botil*, a large common bean; *xakil-chenek* or *frijol de vara*; and the *x-luumil-chenek* or *frijol de la tierra*, thus called because it is a creeping plant.

Chile is planted on a separate lot, 15–20 m. square. The planting is done during the first weeks of March, in alternate years so that it will not coincide with the year when the people of Cancuc plant cotton. Chile planted by the people of Oxchuc is *dzajal-ik* or red chile.

241 Toward the end of August, the first fruits are ready (*unimajam* or *jilote*, according to Ladinos). These are received with great joy by the families which are by then lacking food. From each plant, which provides two or three *jilotes*, the farthest down is picked to let the other two grow bigger. These jilotes are boiled without salt and are eaten whole, including the husks.

[242] [252] [263] [262] [P 201-A]

4: Villa Rojas E-4, 5 (1938-1944) 1969
NV9 Tzeltal NV9

443 ket of Tenejapa. Other commercial centers are Ocosingo, Chilon, and Yajalon in the north. These markets are also frequented by Ladinos, but others, located far from the cabecera, are exclusively for Indians. The most important of them is the Saturday market of Yochib near Tenejapa, Cancuc, and Oxchuc. It draws 300–400 natives, who arrive at dawn carrying agricultural and handcraft products. Most people come from 8 to 10 in the morning, after which they begin to depart; about 2 or 3 P.M. only those staying to drink chicha are left. Transactions [439] are paid in trade or in money.

*Wage Work*

• 464 Because the cold climate and the rugged topography of the region produce little corn, the natives must work periodically as day laborers on the coffee plantations of the Soconusco area on the Pacific coast. About 7000 Tzeltal and a few more Tzotzil work there each year. Natives may go to the coffee plantations any time of the year but prefer to do so during the months the milpa requires less attention (either after planting or after harvest). Between Yajalon and Ocosingo are plantations where men from the neighboring villages are hired for short periods.

556 578 829 183 *Use of Wealth*

Because of their social organization, it is very difficult for these Indians to accumulate wealth. The worst sin an individual can commit against the community is to store up crops, domestic animals, or clothes, or simply to build a better house. Whatever [754] raises an individual above his fellows—buying a new house, improving an old one, buying a horse—can cause in them a deep fear of being the target of witchcraft (Villa Rojas, 1947).

556 829 183 Those who, enjoying good health, are able to pile up some wealth, are obliged by the community to spend it in banquets and amusements for the community. It is believed that the old men and principales

[P. 213-A]

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle



ties to the center. They register births and deaths in the township center, but they do not have any representation in the cabildo. The populations have no identification with Indian subgroups, speak Spanish, and are oriented to the regional rather than the local economic center. The plantations remaining in the area, classified as *ranchos* in the national census, employ Indians from the center. Their only relationship to the central authority is to get help in recruiting additional laborers. Recruitment of labor is no longer coercive as it was prior to the 1930s when the low wage rate could not attract the help needed. Announcements of the need for workers are made by the president on the loudspeaker system of the town, and men voluntarily go to the plantations.

## Spirit Domains

The link between people and place is through the media of the spirits (*ʔuleletik*) of persons and of locale. The relationship is maintained through a set of rules governing the behavior among spirits of people and of places. These rules derive from myths and stories of encounters which define the character of the spirits in each of the domains. Danger is localized in a series of caves which are avoided. Benevolent, or guardian, spirits inhabit a different set of sites, where ceremonies are conducted that maintain the well-being of the individual and of the community. By locating and circumscribing places of danger and guardianship, the members of the community can supplicate helpful spirits and avoid evil; they are delivered from fear of the unknown and provided with a rationale for dealing with fear of the known.

The places where spirits meet are outlined in Table 3. The first group includes spirits which are supplicated, the second, dangerous spirits which are avoided or approached only by powerful persons.

*The house spirits.* The spirits of inhabitants and of the house meet at the center post at the rear wall of the house. The spirit of the house lives in this post. Those who claim to have seen the house spirit say he is a small Ladino child. He is capricious, and if he is not happy, he may admit the evil spirits who will eat the souls of the inmates. His appe-

7t Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970

NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle

# Chapter 2

# Traditional Economic Activities

The traditional occupation of every adult man is working in the milpa and of every adult woman, making pottery. The fiction is maintained that they do this work, even if they are actually engaged fulltime in some other activity. In response to the census question, "What is the work of the man or woman?" men answered universally that they were agriculturalists and women that they were potters. Men who work outside the community, in the fincas or in the sawmills, consider this a temporary means of gaining cash income and do not define themselves as sawyers or laborers for others. They work outside the community only when they do not have sufficient land to provide themselves with corn to eat and a surplus to sell, or when they must pay debts incurred by bethrothal or assumption of religious posts. Many women who do not make pottery for extended periods of time, or make it only for a special fiesta, still consider themselves pottery producers.

Persistence of the same occupations and the daily effort to make a living strengthen the link between generations and to tradition. The primary emphasis in child training is teaching both boys and girls to work efficiently and industriously in these traditional occupations. The techniques for codifying and perpetuating a given way of doing things, particularly evident in pottery production, provide clues to the way in which other kinds of behavior are schematized.

## Agricultural Production

Agricultural production involves two areas of decision making: what to grow and when to schedule each activity related to production. Decisions in both these areas are based upon custom and time-proved results. I shall

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle



owned plots of less than five hectares, corn is clearly the major crop, with 83 percent of the land devoted to its production. In the ejido lands, it is cultivated on less than 50 percent of the land, with wheat and beans sharing the remaining lands. Included in the category of ownership of five hectares or more are three large fincas where cattle fodder is grown. These fincas employ eighty-three laborers, some of whom live in the town center.

Since the Mexican census figures do not take into account the total land holdings of the household, I shall refer to the data on land use from my own census in 1964 (Table 5). Beans are grown (except in three cases) only if the household has more than the one hectare of ejido land grant. Corn and beans are grown together only on irrigated lands, both in high lands and in low country. Most farmers with ejido land grow wheat in addition to corn only when the land is in continual production, since it is believed that wheat gives "heat" to the land and improves the soil. This belief is supported by the real value of crop rotation.

Decisions concerning what crops to plant where are based on two sets of criteria: topology and soil characteristics. These criteria, furthermore, are the basis for determining what kinds of seed should be planted and what techniques of cultivation should be utilized.

*Topological criteria.* Because of the relative wealth of land resources, the steep hills are left uncultivated. All of the steep hills are communally owned, and the second growth of pine and scrub oak provides firewood. Tall pine growing in the higher lands of the colonia of San Vicente is sold by the community to private lumber companies.

The "belly of the land," the mound-like hillocks at the bottom of the hills, are sometimes cultivated or used for pasturage. On hilly lands farmers put rocks in the banks or curve the rows of corn to avoid erosion. The very low lands of the valley floor must be drained by digging ditches.

The flat irrigated lands of the valley floor are the most desirable lands for cultivation. The Indians are reluctant to sell these lands, and hold on to them until they are forced to sell.

---

When the officials reach concensus on what the mean yield (or *medio calculo* as they call it) is, they multiply this by the known amount of seed planted. Every six years a house-to-house census of what was planted is made.

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle



base, so the farmers prefer to plant the better, quicker-growing corn seed in a mixed sand and loam soil.

The final evaluation of land is based on results at harvest. The range of variation is large: from 48 liters of yield per liter of seed to 80 litters of yield per liter of seed. Township officials say that the average harvest is five *fanegas* (1 fanega equals 12 liters) or 60 liters per liter of seed. Market prices are of less importance in deciding what crops will be planted than are considerations of what the soil "wants" and what labor is involved. Corn is grown on all kinds of land, whereas beans and special crops such as cabbages can be grown only on the more fertile soil. Wheat can be grown only where there is irrigation. One farmer raised cabbage in cooperation with a Ladino and earned 1,000 pesos, four times the amount he earned with his wheat crop the previous year. Despite the greater return for cabbage, the farmer did not plant it the next year when the Ladino, who had supported the first venture, withdrew his support. The reason he gave for this was the fact that there was more work involved and he could not accomplish it alone: first the crop had to be planted, then transplanted, then irrigated every three days in the early growing period, and cultivated two or three times; every eight days he had to get rid of worms. He estimated that growing cabbage involved well over four times the amount of work necessary for growing corn.

*Labor.* Most agricultural work is performed by members of households with exchange or hired labor. There is no specialization of labor when the work force includes two or more men since the men cooperate in doing each task. Communal labor is restricted to the maintenance of the main irrigation ditches. Each year the ditches are dug out where the sides have eroded and cleaned of brush and leaves. The president and judges unite to decide on a time for this work and announce it on a loudspeaker of one of the cantinas. This usually occurs around the twenty-fifth of December. Formerly, all the men of the community helped in this work whether or not they owned irrigated fields. In 1958 those who did not own such land "got smart" and refused to work.

In 1962 the civil officials decided that a cement canal should be installed near the source of the spring. They tried to finance it with contributions

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle



vest. Harvesting is done by all the members of the household, sometimes with the assistance of exchange or hired labor. Women help by going to the fields and degraining the cobs with few kernels of corn so that there will not be an unnecessary burden to carry to the houses.

A small fiesta for the corn is made following the harvest. The purpose of the fiesta is to reciprocate the spiritual owner of the corn by giving him a "gift." Two candles are lit and set on top of the piles of corncobs. Two other candles are placed near the heaps of corn grains gathered by the

TABLE 7. Stages of Corn Growth and Agricultural Activities

| *Stages of growth* | *Activity* | *Time (after planting)* |
|---|---|---|
| Šlihk sčital (begins to grow) | First hoeing | 8 days |
| Čištal lik ʔiišm (well-grown; about 4 feet) | Second hoeing | 1 month |
| Čištal stekan sni? (begins to form husk) | | 2 months |
| B'al tzuto (begins to bud) | | |
| Lok'iš tzutohal (flower comes out) | | 3 months |
| Yihiš sk'ab'enal (begins to mature) | | 4 months |
| Lok'iš yihkatz (cobs fill out) | | |
| Sčam hol (its head dies) | Pick cobs to eat fresh | 5 months |
| Yihištal sk'anubiš (now more yellow) | Double over stalks | 6 months |
| Yihubiš (more yellow) | | |
| Tahkiniš (dry) | | |
| Sk'ahik lok'el (harvest time) | Pick dried corn | 7 months |

women. The candles cause the spirit of the corn to rise and give its "gift to the world" in the following harvest. Failure to make a fiesta would mean an end to all corn harvests.

Corn is brought to the house and stored in the rafters, since there are no corn cribs or separate storage facilities of any kind in the village. Most of the houses are infested with rats as a consequence. When the harvest is brought in, there is an attempt to rid the rafters of these "thieves." The men and boys armed with slingshots stand posted in the yard as the children rustle around in the rafters chasing the rats out. Although they are remarkably good shots since they use this tool from early childhood, the houses are never completely free of rats, and the inhabitants learn to put up with them.

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle



which there is a black variety and a colored variety, and (2) climbing beans, of which there are four subclasses: "painted," white, yellow, and black. Beans must be grown only in irrigated lands of highest productiv-

TABLE 8. Schedule of Activities in Wheat Production

| Activity | Winter wheat | Summer wheat | No. of days necessary for task: Winter wheat | Summer wheat | Helpers | Tools |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Clear land | Dec. 7 | May 12 | 5 | 2 | 2 paid workers | Machete, forked stick |
| Irrigate land; leave soaking | Dec. 7 | May 15 | 1 | 1 | | |
| Plow | Dec. 15 | May 23 | 1 | 2 | Oxen team | Plow |
| Sow seed broadcast; cover, crossing over twice | Dec. 16 | May 24 | 1 | 1 | Oxen team | Plow |
| Cut wheat | May 1 | Oct. 5 | 2 | 2 | 2 or 3 unpaid workers | Scythe |
| Thresh | | | | | | |
| Carry wheat to shelter | May 3 | Oct. 7 | | | | Net bags |
| Horses trample wheat | May 4 | Oct. 8 | | | | |
| Shake stalks | | | | | | Forked stick |
| Scoop grains into wooden box and sift to get rid of chaff | May 5 | Oct. 9 | 3 | 3 | 4 or 5 unpaid workers, 5 horses | Box with wire mesh |
| Put grain in burlap bags; carry to houses on horseback | | | | | | Burlap bags |

[115] SOURCE: Information from two informants, one who grows winter wheat and the other who grows summer wheat, both cultivating ½ hectare of irrigated land.

ity. The land in the center, except for the fertilized corral areas, has lately yielded a very poor harvest. People say that the soul of the bean departed when they introduced the crop to their ejido plots in hot country. The scheduling of bean production is shown in Table 9.

7t Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle



241
825

*Guarding the crops.* The crops must be guarded against intruders. The farmers sometimes sleep in the fields when they expect animals to steal the ripening corn. They observe the habits of these intruders and develop belief systems which help them organize opposition:

*The raccoon steals maize seeds. He pushes down cornstalks when they are in elote and steals the cob. He is very smart. He can tell whether the owner is sleeping or not by putting his hand on his own anus. If his anus is cold, the owner is awake; if it is hot the owner is asleep and he enters.*

*Some men who live below in Alannantik have good dogs. They planted their milpa, and the next night wanted to hunt. "You stay with one dog,"*

TABLE 9. Schedule of Activities in Bean Production

244
461
464 •
412

| *Activity* | *Date* | *No. of days necessary for task* | *Helpers* | *Tools* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Cleaning and preparation of soil is same as for corn (Table 6) | | | | |
| Ground beans | | | | |
| Plant between rows of corn | Mar. 1 | 2 | 3 exchange workers | Digging stick |
| Cultivate | Apr. 19 | 3 | 2 exchange workers | Hoe |
| Harvest, pulling up entire plants and putting them in burlap bags | July 10 | 2 | | |
| Store in eaves of house | | | | Burlap bags |
| When pods are very dry, beat bag with stick to depod beans | Sept. 1 | 2 | women of household | Stick |
| Pole beans | | | | |
| Plant, following the second hoeing of corn, setting seeds near each hillock of corn | May 2 | 1 | | Digging stick |
| Wind the vines up on corn stalk; tie | June | 1 | | |
| Cut pods and store in burlap bags in eaves of house | Nov. | 1 | | Burlap bags |
| Shell beans as they are used | | | | |

SOURCE: Same as for Table 6.

[115]

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle



323 pyramid is complete, wood is laid against the pots in a tepee formation.
[313] When the sawmill in the vicinity was in operation, flat boards—scraps of
[372] cut lengths—were used, but now only logs are available. Corn husks or
[462] dry straw are stuffed between the planks or logs. When a large number of
pots are being fired, the men usually help at the final stages to remove the
[476] charred planks with poles. If men are not available, the women of the
[292] household often call upon their neighbors for help. In this operation, the
women wear sandals and hats for protection from the heat. When the pots
are cooled, the women, sometimes with the help of the men, stack them in
net bags, six to a net with straw protecting the pots.

647 About fifteen year ago, a kiln was introduced by the government in the
177 interest of conserving wood. Those who tried it claim that the pottery did
323 not fire well and that many of the pots were broken. I.N.I. (the Instituto
372 Nacional Indigenista) planned to introduce an improved kiln, and while
most of the people we questioned expressed a willingness to try it, the pro-
posal was never put into action.

462 The men do most of the marketing of pottery. Loads of one or two
442 dozen may be taken by bus or truck to San Cristóbal or to Comitán.
443 When there is large-scale production throughout the community, as occurs
494 just before major fiestas, truckers come from the neighboring town of
Teopisca to contract for delivery.

592 The amount of pottery produced in households varies with the follow-
323 ing factors:
433

1. Household composition: (a) Number of women in the family.
[464] If there is only one woman, very little or no pottery is produced because
of the demands of domestic duties. Households with two or more women
are able to sustain the ideal output of at least a dozen water jugs a week
(I use "ideal" here to suggest their notion of what they produce when
asked to guess. As Fig. 2 indicates, this varies considerably during the
[887] year.) (b) Age of women and ages of children. Older women over sixty
do not independently undertake pottery production. They may assist
in washing pots with corn gruel or making the neck, mouth, and
handles, but they are unable to endure the harder task of collecting clay.
A woman with infants under two years of age makes little pottery if

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle



there is no other woman in the house. (c) Number of men in the family. If there are productively employed men, women of the household tend to make less pottery, since they are busy cooking and washing and have their basic subsistence needs supplied. Pottery is then produced to supply cash for fiestas only. Widows make a great deal of pottery since they must either hire men to work in the milpa or buy corn.

2. Wealth of the family: Relatively wealthy families make almost no pottery. In other cases, the scheduling of production is related to consumption needs. Figure 2 charts the pottery production by type of item produced for a family which included two unmarried women, their mother, father, and grandmother. The peaks in production occur just before the major fiestas when the family wants additional money to buy meat, fruits, and clothing. Although this family produced more pottery than the majority of households because of the presence of four women, its production typifies the high periods of activity relating to the fiestas. Production is also related to the seasonal changes: during the rainy season (from June to October) many households curtail production, except to earn money for the fiesta of Santiago (July 25), because of the difficulty of firing without closed kilns.

Variation in production means that an overall estimate of income from pottery cannot be made. It ranges from none to nearly 90 percent of family income in the case of widows without land or male helpers. I would guess that an average family might earn 200 pesos a year, about 10 to 15 percent of the money value of crops. One family of two widows and five children who work constantly throughout the year averages an income of about 600 pesos, or about one-half what an agriculturist can make on one-half hectare of land.

## The Motivation to Produce

The motivation to work is tied directly to consumption needs of the household. Failure to meet expenditures with income from agriculture and pottery is met by men hiring out as agricultural workers or as laborers in the sawmill. This alternative is chosen over that of increasing the size

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle



of the farm by renting additional land, as European peasants typically did,[5] since there is very little land available for rent and the returns are not immediate. Farmers will try to avoid this by acquiring land grants to increase subsistence agriculture.

Expenditures and earnings were studied in six families over varying periods of time from ten days to one year. The data are summarized below.

Family No. 1, consisting of a husband, his wife, and their married daughter separated from her husband and child, is able to meet all of their need for corn and brown sugar and most of their need for beans by the crops they raise on one-half hectare of ejido land in hot country, one-half hectare of ejido land in the township, and three-quarters hectare of privately owned, irrigated land in the township. On their irrigated land, they grow one-half hectare of wheat and one-quarter hectare of corn. In hot country they grow corn, beans, and sugar cane on the margins of the field. The cane is ground in a cooperatively owned mill, and their crop in 1965 produced 144 *tapas,* or measures of one kilogram worth 5 pesos. In addition to 200 pesos earned for the wheat crop, 100 pesos for the bean crop, 298 pesos for corn, this farmer earned 808 pesos for outside work. His high wage income is due to his working for an American at twice the usual daily pay. The farmer buys coffee by the twenty-five-pound bag costing 62 pesos in hot country, a saving of about one-half the retail price of coffee in the town, where it is sold at 5 or 7 pesos at pound. In twelve months of recorded expenditures, the family spent 609.50 pesos or 83 percent of their budget on food, 40 pesos or 5 percent of their budget on clothing and 82 pesos or 11 percent of their budget on medicine.

The high expenditures in the case of family No. 2, consisting of a man, his wife, and two mature sons, was due to the fact that one of the boys was carrying on a betrothal suit. The bride-price had been fixed at 500 pesos, toward which the family was contributing whatever excess of income over expenditures it had. The son who was seeking a wife worked fifty-six days in the sawmill at a wage of 15 pesos per day during the six-month period recorded, earning 255 pesos. In addition, he and his brother earned 160 pesos for agricultural work for other families in the village.

5. Chayanov (1966:7) demonstrated that Russian peasant families expanded the size of their farms when the subjective needs of the family increased, not as a response to market prices for crops or rents.

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle



434 592 irrigated land in addition to their one-half hectare of ejido land. He supplements his income with work in the sawmill for some periods of the year, at a wage of 90 pesos a week, making a total of 165 pesos in the ten days recorded. The family spent 81 percent or 36 pesos of the budget on food, 13 percent or 6 pesos on clothing 2.3 percent or 1 peso on household supplies, and 3 percent or 1.20 pesos on medicines.

434 592 241 262 These family budgets show that most of the corn and beans can be supplied by subsistence agriculture. Garden crops of chile, chayote (a green vegetable which produces a fruit and an edible root), and fruit trees, including lime and anone, are raised in the house yard. Tomatoes, fruit, and cabbages are bought in neighboring market towns.

434 592 171 In comparison with household consumption expenditures in the United States and other foreign countries, these budgets show a much higher proportion of cash income spent on food. The percentages of food expenditures range from 63.2 to 97.0 in the families studied, whereas in the United States the average percentage is only 26.3, in Argentina 59.2, and in Zambia 66.5 (Conference Board Economic Almanac 1967). This reflects the fact that the people of Tzo?ontahal have no expenses for house rental, that wood for fuel and light is available in communally owned forests, and that most of the household utensils such as jars, jugs, and bowls, are locally produced. However, failure to report items must also be noted—no one reported purchasing matches although everyone uses them, and only half of the families reported use of soap, although this is universally purchased.

433 241 A gross estimate of the land necessary to fulfill consumption needs of corn for a family of two adults and four children would be approximately one and a half to two hectares. The yearly average consumption of corn for such a family is about 2,000 kilograms. One hectare produces from 1,200 to 2,000 kilograms in addition to 80 kilograms of beans. Of the 299 families whose land ownership is given in Table 5, 142 have only one hectare of ejido land and 85 more have only one-half additional hectare of privately owned land. This means that 227 households, or 61 percent do not have enough land to meet their subsistence needs. 160 household heads

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle



have recently sought additional lands in the ejido of Brindis to meet these minimal requirements. This preference for expanding subsistence agriculture to hiring out as laborers is the best index to the persistence of traditional economic pursuits.

Farmers who do not have a cash crop in wheat may be forced to sell corn even when there is no surplus. Because they usually need the cash as soon as they harvest their crop, they must sell when the prices are low. Thus their consumption needs exacerbate the disadvantage they face in the market.

Clothing, whether traditional or modern in style, requires cash outlays. Women have kept the traditional costume while men are modifying their clothing. Even when they go to hot country, older women wear the heavy cotton skirt bound with a thick sash and topped by an embroidered blouse; some younger women have adopted the long cotton dirndl skirt and peasant blouse. A white cotton shawl is added for ceremonial events or for warmth in the evening. All of their clothing is either bought or made of materials woven on looms in Comitán or San Bartolomé. The navy blue skirt, which they say is black, and the red and yellow sash are sold for 40 to 50 pesos by Ladina vendors who come to town. The blouse is made from two meters of heavy white cotton sold in the local stores or in Teopisca and San Cristóbal. Most prefer the more expensive cotton woven on bed looms in San Bartolomé, but it is not always available. They embroider the wide bands of yellow and red around the neckline with embroidery floss sold in the local store. The fringed shawl from Comitán is also sold locally, but is often purchased during the annual fiestas in the town. These items are replaced every two or three years, depending on the wealth of the family. The newer clothing is worn on ceremonial occasions, and the older clothing is worn every day. Women wear sandals and hats for protection only when they are firing pottery. For jewelry they wear bead necklaces, sometimes with crosses attached. Their hair is braided with ribbons for fiestas, or simply left hanging when they work.

Men buy a woolen jacket called *kotonču,* which is brought illegally from the Department of Huehuetenango, Guatemala, where it is made,

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle



model introduced was faulty or they were not taught to use it properly. Notions about the supernatural relation between souls of crops, man, and the saints do not interfere with experimentation or adaptation at the instrumental level. Obligations with respect to them are carried on as a supplement to other practical measures.

The organization of men's work in agriculture contrasts with that of women's work in pottery. Men's work, when performed cooperatively by two or more of an extended household or exchange labor team, is mechanically organized, in Durkheim's terminology. Each of the men does the same task, working closely in the rows of the milpa. Women's work groups are organically organized since segmentation of the pottery production in the stages described above makes possible specialization within a domestic production group including two or more women. Preferences and special abilities can be taken into account. The potters with more experience do the jobs which require more judgement and skill, such as mixing the clay or making the bases, and then the work is passed on to less proficient workers. Or an older woman can leave the more strenuous tasks, such as mixing clay or building up the sides of the larger pots, to younger women and perform the lighter tasks, such as putting on the neck and handles.

These differences in the organization of male and female work tasks suggest the need for a reformulation of the classification of whole societies as organically or mechanically integrated. In assessing the potential for change, internal variations in the organization of production might provide the clues for implementing development programs.

The division of labor according to sex is nearly absolute: women do not learn to work in the milpa nor do men learn to make pottery or perform household tasks. However, women will gather firewood, and men will transport clay (although they do not collect the clay deposits in balls) and help in firing pottery. Women can live without men in the household economy of the town, but men cannot live without women. This is because male labor is a market commodity while female labor in household activities is not. A widow can hire a man to work her fields, but a man cannot hire a cook. If he is widowed, he must remarry, move into his

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970

NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle



mother's house, find a wife for a grown son, or find an unattached female relative to live with him. 736 562

Traditional agricultural and pottery production contained within household units has limited specialization and the formation of classes. Whatever exceeded consumption needs was absorbed in a ceremonial fund that served to maintain existing standards. The aim of production was to maintain a given level of "poverty and suffering" as they said in prayers of thanksgiving. These old standards are no longer adequate. Family budgets reflect a range of alternatives requiring an increasing amount of cash expenditure on goods made outside of the community. Because of land limitations, these new preferences are met by wage labor rather than increases in the size of the farm. The new enterprises discussed in the following chapter provide the income streams which are disrupting the present distribution of wealth and the social system based on it. 434 177 464

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle

# Chapter 3

# New Economic Activities

The role of the Indian in the regional and national economy is being shaped more and more by supralocal institutions in public and private enterprises. The Indians of Tzo?ontahal have mobilized their own resources to incorporate these opportunities. In this they reveal a selective perception of the economic and social advantages of innovation and a tendency to translate form and function into a local idiom. The success of planning at national or regional levels depends upon incorporation of projects at local levels, while the survival of the local group depends upon acceptance of the new opportunities to absorb rising populations.

The major institutional settings in which innovation is occurring are (1) the ejido program, (2) employment in agricultural and nonagricultural enterprises outside of the community, and (3) economic enterprises originating within the community. My discussion of the economic potential of the local community to adapt to change will be organized in terms of these settings.

## The Economic Potential of the Ejido

Mexico's ejido program, as one of the oldest and most extensive attempts at land reform in the hemisphere, provides a basis for assessing the economic potential of such programs. Here I shall consider only the effects of ejido administration in the community and what this case illustrates of the potential for development in the future.

Manuel Giraul (quoted in de la Peña 1951:327) summarizes the negative effects of the ejido program:

> In Mexico, the ejido system constitutes an institutionalized block to the reform of the social and economic structure; it corresponds to a

71 Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle



highly stratified primitive society, which remains static: it lacks the flexibility and mobility that exists in modern societies.

The history of the ejido program in Tzo?ontahal in the first few years after it was organized in 1937 seemed to confirm this conclusion. Its immediate effect was to block the flow of labor and goods in the regional and national markets. The ejidatarios were no longer forced to sell their labor at the prevailing rate of 25 cents a day, a wage which was not enough to supply the needs of even one man much less those of a household. Children and women formerly had to work with their husbands in the coffee fincas in order to meet their most immediate consumption needs. The independence that the ejido tract gave meant that men could withhold their own labor and that of the subordinate members of the family from such exploitation. The second harvests coming from the ejido plots in low country freed the Indians from having to buy corn in July, August, and September at the inflated market prices which took advantage of the scarcity of this basic necessity.

The political effect of the ejido in the early days was to fortify the corporate community against the shocks of the outside world. The first lands acquired were primarily allotments of corporate lands alienated by the laws of 1856 and 1876. Populations remained in situ, whether they were foreign Indians working on the expropriated estates, or residential communities created in the sixteenth century as crown towns.

The township of Amatenango acquired its first ejido land grant in 1937. One of the early promoters of the ejido, a *revestido* Indian (one who has adopted western clothing) from Huistán who had been a laborer on one of the fincas within the township limits, threatened to become a rural *cacique*, or local boss, comparable to those who emerged from the agrarian revolt in the central plateau (Friedrich 1962). This leader was elected president, but during his term of office he was expelled because of his attempt to secure house plots in the center for himself and other Huistecan Indians residing in the barrio of Yetawitz (Chapter 9).

The stabilizing effects of the ejido in its earlier phase have been upset in recent years. As the population of the center expanded, new families migrated to the nearby barrios contiguous to the town center. These new set-

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970

NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle
Mexico NU1



tional economy and polity at a more rapid pace than has ever occurred in the past. Typical of this new movement is the recently established ejido of Brindis, formed by a core of landless Indians from the town working with acculturated Indians from Teopisca. Whether the political unity which has developed in the course of establishing their claim to the land will continue to provide a base for community development will depend on the encouragement and support by national institutions.

Within Indian communities of highland Chiapas, the ejido program has weakened age-authority principles in the family and in the civil hierarchy (Day n.d., Edel n.d.). Sons are no longer primarily dependent on their fathers for acquiring economic independence. Ejido Commission leaders have broken the monopoly of power by a gerontocracy of principales. Outside of the community, however, the political and economic potential of the ejido has not yet been fully realized. As the new ejidos such as Brindis develop, they may break the old community boundaries that contained and limited the power of the ejidatarios. With rising literacy, many Indians now read the *Codigo Agraria* sold in neighboring markets, and they are increasingly conscious of their rights. If unity across township boundaries could be achieved, the new ejidos might become an effective political force in regional and national spheres.

## Wage Labor and Occupational Specialties

The agriculturalists of the community do work as both exchange and paid laborers in the following forms: reciprocal exchange, part time labor and part-time independent agricultural work, and forestry.[1] Wage work is considered only a supplement to independent self-employment for all but twenty agricultural employees who work full-time on a finca within the township.

Payments for agricultural labor within the community are lower than the prevailing rate outside of the town and are higher in the fincas of hot country than in the highlands. When men work on the fincas of landowners in the neighboring township, they prefer payment by the task (*tarea*) rather than by the day, since they can usually complete two tareas by

1. See Richard N. Adams (1964:48) for a discussion of the forms of rural labor.

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle



465 working long hours. Thus they receive 12 pesos for about one and a half times as many hours as is worked locally for the prevailing wage of 6 pesos (ten hours in comparison with the usual day's work of six to seven hours in the town). For this reason they maximize the effort expended in getting to fields outside of their own township. The lower payment in [476] town entails an obligation on the owner's part to reciprocate the labor, but the payment relieves him of an immediate demand on his time. Exchange 476 labor without payment requires reciprocity within the same activity schedule: thus if a man assists someone else during harvesting, he expects that person to assist him during the same harvest period. If, however, he will be unable to reciprocate immediately, the payment of 6 pesos terminates [465] an immediate obligation, but he will be expected to respond when he can if other requests should be made by this same farmer. Exchange labor without payment is contracted between relatives, compadres, and neighbors, using the network of established social ties to reinforce the obligation to reciprocate.

464 Agricultural work in the fincas in hot country is undertaken only when [434] there is extreme need for supplementary income, or when a man is escap- [754] ing the threat of being killed as a witch. In the 1920s, when the Indians had limited land resources and prevailing wages were low, some were forced to go to the fincas of the Argentino and Aregovia near Tapachula. [626] Despite the economic necessity for their undertaking this work, the social pressure was so strong against it that they would leave early in the morning to avoid being jeered as they passed in the street. The women rarely [462] accompanied them because they could produce pottery at home and supplement earnings. The prevailing rate now is 15 to 18 pesos per tarea, a [465] half-day's work, but Indians work in the finca only when urgently pressed.

Nonagricultural labor in the sawmills is a source of employment for twenty-two Indians of the town. Lumber companies operating in the forested areas of Montebello Lake have employed Indians of the town for [465] the past year. The wage offered, from 15 to 18 pesos a day, exceeds the 12-peso wage paid to agricultural laborers in the immediate area, but corresponds to that paid in hot country. The men must live at the sawmill, and supplies of tortillas made by their families are brought in on Wednesdays

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle



by the company truck to replenish supplies they bring with them. Most of the workers are young men in their twenties and thirties. They return Saturday evening in a truck supplied by the company and go back to work on Monday morning. Weekly wage payments have upset the usual controls over budget management. Money earned from crops is handled by women. The sawmill workers have resisted passing over their paychecks to their wives or mothers, and several court cases have been precipitated as a result (Appendix 2b).

All of the work in which men are engaged outside of the community is voluntarily undertaken for cash compensation. Formerly, forced labor of two kinds was frequently demanded of the Indians: communal labor in the neighboring ladino town when Tzo?ontahal was an *agente municipal* of that town, and work in neighboring fincas for wages of 50 cents a day. Forced communal work came to an end when the town became an independent municipio in 1931, and the labor roundups at substandard wages were ended when Indians became conscious of their rights guaranteed in the *Ley Federal del Trabajo* in the late 30s. Copies of the *Colección Juridica Ley Federal del Trabajo* are sold in the departmental marketplace along with the *Codigo Agraria*. Awareness of their rights as workers is concomitant with increasing entry into wage labor employment outside of the local community. As yet, Indians do not have any organized labor interest groups to champion their rights. The Commissioner of Indian affairs in the departmental capital is an intermediary in individual cases that arise. But wage levels and conditions of work are set in a free market in which the Indian's only control is to refuse to work.

The few special occupations in the town, such as butchering, caponizing, weaving bags, carpentry, and midwifery, have never developed into full-time professions.[2] The failure of the development of specialization is related to the tradition of ritual offerings of gifts of liquor and consumables and to the lack of a marketplace in the town.

Most of the livestock raised in the town is sold to butchers of the neighboring town because of lack of storage or of market facilities for the meat. Pigs and bulls are slaughtered in town only on the occasion of a celebra-

2. Curing is treated in a separate chapter since it is an exceptional case of specialization related to social control.

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle



hall, but always appear at major ceremonies and at the inauguration of the new officials. Residents of the barrios and colonias can never rise to any position above that of assistant judge, but once they have served in this post they may become principales in their own localities. One week the first regidor from Ahk'olnantik serves with the third regidor from Alannantik, and the next week the second regidor from Ahk'olnantik serves with the fourth regidor from Alannantik. The ten police are ranked in five levels with representatives from each side at every level in the series except for the fourth level, which is occupied by police from the barrios.

These civil officials, called as a group the *hu?eletik*, those who are "able" (in control), constitute the traditional ladder of the hierarchy. To reach a high post, an official must first pass through each of the lower positions in the hierarchy. Outside of this ranked hierarchy, the posts of president and síndico are occupied by young men who are able to read, write, and speak fluently in Spanish. Literacy was, until the present generation, limited to a few men in their thirties. With increasing literacy, the competition for these posts is growing.[2] Men who have such skills are called upon as signers of official documents and are called *firmanetik*.

Also existing outside of the traditional hierarchy is the post of secretary which had, until 1965, been occupied by a Ladino. This was the only post which was paid; it also provided opportunity for earning extra income by preparing "acts," or official documents, and fines from court cases. The present incumbent is an Indian of Alannantik.

Because Tzo?ontahal's hierarchy is still a linked series of civil and religious posts, the structure of the civil hierarchy cannot be considered independently from that of the religious hierarchy. The major segments of the religious hierarchy are the *martomaetik*, mayordomos or caretakers, and *alperesetik*, alfereces or captains of the fiestas. The internal ranking of the sixteen mayordomos depends on the number of religious posts the incumbent has filled and on the rank order of the saints he serves.

The alfereces, or captains of the fiestas, provide a ceremonial link be-

2. Julio de la Fuente (1964:30) has summarized the effect of literacy in breaking the homogeneity of the community since the literate Indians have received greater privileges and release from communal work. When the entire community is educated, the monopoly of literacy is broken.

7t Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle



ship role in the new political setting. As a result, it was the marginal Indians, outsiders who had come as did Augustín to work as *baldíos* (laborers) on the finca near the town, that were the drivng force behind the demand for land. This was the basis for the new leadership in the early days of land reform. The ejido program, conceived of by Cárdenas as a basis for political development of the campesinos, (Brandenburg 1964) gave these marginal Indians the opportunity to rise to positions of influence in local government. The reluctance of the townspeople to take action against Augustín derived in part from fear, since he reputedly backed his use of force with witchcraft—the imported kind of witchcraft in which poisons are used instead of spiritual force.

Ceferino, the man who finally deposed Augustín, was a member of the traditional community, but because he had been impoverished by burying four members of his family in the typhoid epidemic of 1928, he had been forced to work in the fincas. There he had learned Spanish and some of the ways of the dominant society. His leadership potential had developed in the role of *caporal*, or gang leader of the pickers in the coffee finca, and he had been a leader in the trek of recruited laborers down to the fincas in Soconusco. Under the old authority structure, in which all officials including the president were recruited through the hierarchy, he would never have reached a prestigious position. But in this crisis, he was the only man willigg to confront the incumbent and take over the operation of civil affairs.

Ceferino did not take advantage of the situation to emerge as a cacique himself. As he explained in his narrative, "The pueblo was united. We did not have fear. We were in accord with the principles." The way in which he had been introduced into the cabildo as scribe had successfully neutralized his own ambitions to attain power, if he had any. He accepted the ideal of a united pueblo, recognizing the authority of the principales.

The increasing scope and frequency of relationships between the nation and the locality since the revolution has emphasized the roles of president and síndico at the expense of the authority and control exercised by the principales. The ceremonial significance of the principales in rituals is retained as a symbol of continuity in the change of officials, but their func-

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle



571 805 [584] is accepted. Precipitous action on either side reveals a weakness of which the other party might take advantage, or which might even stop procedures.

Timing of activities is so specific that it can be read as an equation of social relations: People who come to the house after nightfall are either intimate members of the family, or are members of the circle of me?tiktatik invited for a special household celebration—night is the time when spirits wander, not a time for casual visiting. Arrival of the betrothal party at the [584] house of the girl's parents after ten o'clock in the morning indicates that the suit has been accepted.

571 805 554 562 Sequential timing expresses relative prestige and a sense of priority. In "raising" the officials for the official ceremonies, the lowest ranks of officials rise first to go to the house and awaken each of their companions in order of rank. The sequence in serving order has already been discussed with respect to rank and prestige. Another principle of sequence operates at a more subtle level: women go before men when there is expectation of a fight since their presence evokes less hostility. This is evident in the betrothal: the me? č'om precedes the mam c'om in the initial proceedings [584] [579] when strong resistance and hostility is anticipated. When drunken fights start during house ceremonies, women intercede with calming effect.

641 829 805 Time always is on the side of the Indians when they wish to resist national orders. Verbal agreements to pay fines imposed or to assist federal agents in the capture of criminals are frequently followed by deliberate negligence in carrying out the orders. Usually the order is forgotten or in- [847] terest wanes at a higher level. Government agencies such as the INI learned to bide their time much as the Indians did. Expecting opposition to any proposed change, they waited for the initial reaction to die down, and then proceeded as support from those who benefited overcame internal resistence.

461 464 512 805 When called upon to perform jobs that require regular appointments, the Indians respond easily to the daily scheduling. Resistance comes against scheduled requirements that involve long spans of time and interfere with communal and familial ceremonies. Work away from home is [181] undertaken only on the premise that it will be of limited duration. This control over their own time is a value which Indians will not easily yield.

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle

# Chapter 13

# Belief and Behavior in a Changing Society

Continuity is the theme stressed in the rules of the game that apply to living in the square world of the community. The framework of continuity is the landscape itself with the ancestral hills and devils' caves reminding people of the moral order of the past. Repetitive behavior in rituals symbolically projects the past into the future, and behavioral schema in pottery and agricultural production reinforce the belief that all remains the same. The conditions making for change stem from the very attempts to preserve the existing equilibrium. A rising population on a limited land base using colonial techniques of cultivation is bringing about an increasing reliance on outside markets for the sale of labor and the purchase of goods. The ejido program which has perpetuated the system of subsistence cultivation has at the same time increased the dependency on external political influence and undermined dependency on parents. Some of the rules of strategy that have developed in response to changes coming from outside the community can no longer be justified by the beliefs that govern behavior within its boundaries. The community is now in crisis: people are losing faith in the old beliefs and have not yet developed a meaningful ideology for new strategies.

The crisis does not affect all institutions equally. It is absent in the traditional economic activities of milpa cultivation and pottery production. It is incipient in the households, especially where there are wage-workers in nonagricultural jobs. It is more apparent in the civil than in the religious sphere, and it is most manifest in the new economic activities. The school, as an externally imposed institution, generates awareness of the conflict between old beliefs and the ideology of nationalism, but until recently receptivity to these ideas has been limited. The behavior described for each in-

241 596 468 Each man tries to cultivate enough food to make his household self-sufficient the whole year around.

241 868 The younger males of a household are initiated into the agricultural work by their fathers and elder brothers who work with the household head in the same fields. Around the age of ten, they are expected to leave grammar school and the children's playground, and to start learning their life trade: the techniques of cultivation. [582] No young male is capable of marrying if he is not capable of bearing on his shoulders the economic burden of supporting a household with his labor in the fields.

241 433 434 In addition to producing enough corn for the consumption of his homestead, a man is expected to cultivate some surplus which the household can exchange in the local markets and stores for the manufactured goods and staples which they need: machetes, candles, needles, coffee and various other commodities. Moreover, [464] if the household is in need of extra cash to pay for the expenses of a burial, a wedding, or any other emergency expenditure, he is expected to earn it by selling his labor to other men in the village for wages, or by working for short periods of time in the sugar cane plantation of Pujiltic. (Usually between one and two weeks of wage work will cover such emergencies. See Fig. 5.)

562 462 The women of Aguacatenango are economically dependent on their male relatives: father, husband, siblings and adult male children. The women have many responsibilities; they are in charge of cooking and cleaning, sewing the family clothes, gathering [231] firewood for the hearth, and educating the young. They are also [241] in charge of feeding the small livestock which is kept in the

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 77 ]

8: Hunt E-4,5 (1958)1962 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Aguacatenango



Sample: 68 Households

592
464
166

| | | Men | Per Cent |
|---|---|---|---|
| I. | A: | | |
| | Never | 12 | 17 |
| | Pujiltic (sugar cane plantation) | 49 | 71 |
| | Fincas | 5 | 3 |
| | Carretera Construction: (1 month) | 2 | 7 |
| | Napite (school teacher for the INI): (2 1/2 years) | 1 | 1 |
| | Yerba Santa | 1 | 1 |
| | Total | 70 | 100 |
| | B: Period of work in Pujiltik: | | |
| | 1 week | 29 | |
| | 2 weeks | 15 | |
| | 3 weeks | 2 | |
| | 1 month | 1 | |
| | Unknown | 2 | |
| | C: Period of work in Fincas: | | |
| | 1 month | 2 | |
| | 2 months | 1 | |
| | 5 months | 1 | |
| | 3 years | 1 | |
| | D: Status: | | |
| | Household Head | 41 | |
| | Son of household head | 15 | |
| | Da. Son of household head | 2 | |
| | Total | 58 | |
| II. | A: | Women | |
| | San Cristobal | 12 | |
| | Teopisca | 2 | |
| | B: Period of Work: | | |
| | From 3 weeks to 3 years. Average: 12 months. | | |
| | C: Status: | | |
| | Widow | 2 | |
| | Divorcee | 1 | |
| | Single | 11 | |

Fig. 5.--Migratory Labor in Aguacatenango

462 [231] [241] sitio (household territory): pigs and chickens, and the cultivation of the rudimentary gardens within the back patios. These gardens do not have great economic importance. Women plant chiles, cilantro, chayotes, té limón, mostaza, and sometimes even beans and a small milpa for elote (tender corn), but gardening is not a serious occupation: most women only plant two of three varieties of plants, a little bush of flavor herbs for the beans, some medicinal plant, or some flowers to ornament the house altar. Many backyards just grow wild, and the collection of its products is mainly "gathering in one's backyard" rather than harvesting (see Fig. 6).

[434] By selling the products of the small garden, some eggs, or fruits, a woman can contribute to the household cash income, but this money is considered somewhat of a luxury. The extra cash can be used to buy some clothes before a fiesta, or a new pot, or a similar item, but women are not expected to support their families: this is the basic responsibility of the family men.

166 462 464 Women have very few cultural alternatives for transforming their labor into a substantial income. Young single girls whose parents are too poor to support them, or who are alocadas (lightheaded) and desire to break away from home, can leave town to go to work as servants in Ladino towns. Wives running away from a mother-in-law who is too strict, or from a drunkard husband, or widows, would occasionally take up this kind of work. This, of course, isolates a woman from the village, and is a form of self-imposed exile. Working for Ladinos is a somewhat awe inspiring [809] idea. Women "know" or suspect that Ladino men violate Indian

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 79 ]

166 462 464 [829] women and that Ladino women mistreat their servants. Working in towns is remembered, by those who have done it, as a strange mixture of carefree economic independence and innumerable small humilitations and suffering. Its lack of attractiveness is well reflected in the fact that, from a random sample of sixty-eight households, only fourteen women have worked outside their homes (see Fig. 5).

562 462 434 [464] [275] The only women who are the bread-winners or heads of their homes are forced to do so because they have no male relatives to provide for them. In this case, they have few alternatives open to them, the two most common being: 1) acting as a servant (already discussed above); or 2) selling liquor in their houses to the [552] men of the village. This second occupation is not very well thought of by the villagers, trago sellers being gossiped about as being bold women, "sexy" females who enjoy the company of drunks and men married to other women.

Amatenango

462 323 438 [241] (434) In Amatenango, the division of labor presents a very different picture. The whole village of Amatenango is a pottery factory because, in addition to the household income derived from the agricultural work of the village men, each Amatenango woman is a pottery producer.

Pottery that is made for selling is neither a choice, nor a part-time job, nor an individual specialization, but a town specialty. All women in Amatenango are expected to know how to make pots, and to make them. The women of each household

8: Hunt E-4,5 (1958)1962 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango
Aguacatenango



241 then, each season is a question mark, an equally unpredictable
423 year of plenty or a lean year.

184 In Amatenango, when the crop fails or is poor, the income
323 of the villagers can be compensated by producing more pottery.
241 This is obviously not so in Aguacatenango. If hunger threatens
433 the families, the result is a higher migration rate or an increase
434 in the number of men leaving town to work part-time in the fincas.
184 The result of having an alternative form of income within the
166 homestead in Amatenango is that the village keeps its income more
464 balanced year after year, and that the village as a whole has a
731 reputation of being richer than the other communities.
184
434
621

184 In Aguacatenango, the women are an economic burden. The
434 men are very aware that they themselves "do all the work." Women
462 have long and leisurely afternoons which are spent sitting on
562 their porches grooming, chatting, or visiting. Men complain of this, saying "Women cannot realize how hard a man has to work. They complain of not having this or that, but they do not know. . . ." In Amatenango, on the contrary, women are important producers, men and women sharing, equally, the responsibility of supporting their families.

Thus, in the one case, Aguacatenango, the work of women has a marginal, undeterminate value in an economic milieu in which they have no cultural alternatives to convert their labor into goods or subsistence necessities; in the other case, Amatenango, the labor input of women represents about half of the total productive efforts of the villagers.

423
432 

this time arrives. The main reason for selling a house is to [764] pay for the burial of a family member. Most widows, if the house [428] is not reclaimed by the husband's agnatic kin (who have rights over the property if there are no mature sons left by the deceased), will sell the sitio to pay for the husband's burial, and will move to their natal households with their children. Some sons will sell the house to pay for the burial of a father. The selling of the house is also a solution for cases of conflicting inheritance rights. For example, if two brothers claim rights to it, and if they both agree about it, they will sell it and the money obtained would be divided among them.

592
591
578 The fission of the compound household into nuclear households is accepted by the villagers as a traditional pattern of behavior, but residential changes are always expressed in terms of on-going conflict between the couples residing in the compound.

593
592
464
562 A father tries to keep his son living with him for as long as possible because he is an emotional as well as an economic asset to him. While a man has his son living with him, he has an unpaid agricultural worker bound to him by emotional and jural ties and by his economic dependence, and this allows him to maximize the labor force of the household and, therefore, increase production notably. At the same time, he is able to control a relatively larger amount of land for cultivation. If the son leaves the compound, he is forced to divide the land holdings under cultivation and to give him a parcel, a paternal duty which, in spite of the fact that it is expected of them, they try to avoid as long as possible. When the son leaves, the household

593 592 loses his labor and some of its land holdings, while if a daughter 464 leaves, the loss of labor is marginal, there is no loss of land, 562 and her removal is not a drain on the resources of the household, 423 nor does it upset its basic economy.

591 593 182 The multiple bonds between a father and a son over the patrimonial land of the family, the products of their joint effort, and their common responsibility for setting up the standard of living for the homestead, all foster patrilocality.

423 425 592 621 [593] A young man could, today, obtain land without his father's direct help. He cannot obtain irrigated land (because it is extremely scarce, and privately "owned" by the household heads), but he could obtain land in the communal lands of the village. This, of course, is not the better land, being temporal and far away from the village. Although the temporal land close to town is not privately owned, it is "earmarked" for use by the heads of each household. That is, the communal lands are distributed to households, not by titles of ownership, but by usufruct rights. Even if he decides to take such a step, he needs (1) the approval of the Ayuntamiento which oversees the distribution of usufruct rights for the community as a whole, and (2) the recruitment of other men to help him clean and fence the parcel.

621 593 423 425 578 Neither of the two alternatives is easy to carry out in practice. First, if the Ayuntamiento grants land to a man against his father's will, this creates a problem of jurisdiction between the jural rights of the household head and the administrative rights of the Ayuntamiento. We could not predict what consequences such a case would have, because we have no evidence that it has ever occurred (of course, this is based on the case

593 578 histories collected during the field work season, and it well [621] could be that a case was missed). Second, if he wants to obtain [423] help from other men, they risk antagonizing, with their willing- [476] ness to cooperate, the head of the household in which the young man is residing, and they also risk the concommitant sanctions.

423 425 The young man could also obtain land without his father's help by leaving the community to work for wages and saving enough 464 money to buy land. Although the selling of parcels is not a 166 [593] common practice in Aguacatenango, the idea of land being a commodity that can be bought and sold has been introduced, and some few household heads, in cases of emergency, are willing to sell. Of course, leaving the community to work for wages means voluntary exile for a man and alienation from relatives, friends and the cultural milieu. Also, men insist that it is profitable to work for wages only if one does it for short periods of time and keeps milpa simultaneously. Wage work alone is not enough to buy corn and the other necessities to meet the requirements of the customary standard of living.

593 621 156 On the other hand, a man breaking away from his home and refusing to accept his father's authority becomes a deviant, and antagonizes not only his family, but the community.

593 592 156 Although it is possible, theoretically, to become economically independent of one's father against his will, in fact a man can only set up his own household in compliance with the ethical principles and moral conventions of his culture. Therefore, he is only permitted to form his own domestic group when he has demonstrated that he has reached the stage of social maturity which allows him to do so.

423 593 [432] [184] The reasons for keeping a son are not as pressing as the reasons for keeping a daughter. Amatenango land holdings are somewhat smaller than Aguacatenango, and the buying and selling of agricultural parcels, as long as it does not involve outsiders to the village, is a common practice which accounts for approximately 16 per cent of land transactions. The

423 241 592 •464 limited land holding units in Amatenango require minimal cooperation in agriculture. Because of fractured land holdings, fewer than one-half of the households have two tablones . . . of land. Therefore, fewer than one-half the households can keep more than one man actively employed. Even in those households with from two to five tablones, a man and his adult son are sufficient labor for most activities except harvest. 592 323 434 868 [582] [178] Women's pottery production, however, requires frequent cooperation. Two tendencies are reinforcing the cooperation of women, especially of mothers and daughters: (1) with increasing need for cash income to buy products which are not longer produced in the home, or which have been introduced, money is constantly needed. Pottery offers an easy means of acquiring cash with almost immediate returns, and (2) marriages are currently contracted at a later age for girls than formerly. Before, about a generation ago, marriages at the age of eleven or twelve were the rule. Most of the intensive learning of pottery techniques begins at that age. Consequently, pottery was taught to the daughter by the mother-in-law if the girl was married and resided in the husband's house. (See Frans Blom and Oliver LaFarge [1927] who commented that all pottery was taught by the mother-in-law.) [114] Most marriages now are contracted for girls from 14 to 17 years of age. At this time they are already proficient potters, and accustomed to working with their mother. Therefore, there is a greater stress put on their remaining in or near their parental home after marriage (Nash, J., 1960:47).[1]

592 868 323 The people of Amatenango recognize that during the period in which a woman learns to make pottery, she establishes particular habits of cooperation and a strong solidarity bond with the woman from whom she learns and with whom she works. "Parents say that there is an advantage in early marriages, in that the girl would be more willing to learn the ways of her mother-in-law if she

---

[161] [1]It is also important to notice that with the increase in population over the area, the market has increased.

591 If the woman's work in pottery is a crucial factor in
592 making residence choices, then poorer households, which depend
323 more on pottery sales as an important source of income, should
434 also show more emphasis on having the daughters stay at home
361 after marriage, and therefore, the incidence of uxorilocal residence and matrilocal proximity of women should be higher.

361 Within Amatenango "there are clusters of bilaterally re-
602 lated kin which form neighborhood groups. Two of these neighborhoods are spatially set apart from other houses of the barrio
361 and are named" (Nash, J., 1960:52). One of them, the neighbor-
591 hood of Santa Cruz, is composed of households which show greater
434 poverty in comparison with the rest of the village. As it was hypothesized, Santa Cruz also shows a greater incidence of matrilocal proximity. The correlation between lack of household wealth (which increases the importance of woman's pottery making) and residential proximity of a woman to her maternal home is statistically significant at the .001 level (see Table 16).

361 On the other hand, one should also expect the married men
591 to live further apart from their own parents because (1) those who
166 stay at home would reside and work with their wife's relatives,
434 and (2) it is said that some of the men of the neighborhood are
464 forced by their poverty to migrate to the lowlands seeking work in the ranches, and may stay there permanently. This hypotheses is confirmed; the correlation is significant at the .05 level of confidence (see Table 16).

361 The result of poverty in this neighborhood is that while
591 for the community as a whole 49 per cent of the women live in the
434 same neighborhood as their parents, in Santa Cruz 67 per cent of

[Text continued on p. 162]